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GOVERNOR BARBOUR WELCOMES RELEASE OF ARC ENERGY BLUEPRINT

(Jackson, Mississippi) – Governor Haley Barbour today welcomed the Appalachian Regional Commission's (ARC) comprehensive energy blueprint, which he said complements Mississippi's efforts to promote new energy-related job opportunities.

Approved by the governors of the 13 Appalachian states and the ARC Federal Co-Chair, the blueprint's development was mandated at ARC's February 2006 Governors' Quorum Meeting in Washington, D.C. in response to today's changing energy supply, policy, and use environment.

The blueprint includes an assessment of the current global and national energy landscapes and an examination of both non-renewable and renewable energy opportunities, based on the competitive potential of Appalachia's energy resources and current and emerging energy technologies. The framework it provides will guide the Commission in promoting sustainable energy production and efficiency.

The ARC's initiative has special significance in Mississippi, where Governor Barbour is forming a Governor's Energy Task Force to assess resources and develop a strategy for the enhancement and promotion of the state's energy production potential in order to make Mississippi an energy reliable state and create new jobs.

"From farming outputs and coal reserves to Chevron's oil refinery and the Grand Gulf Nuclear Facility, Mississippi has an abundance of resources that create opportunities for the further development of conventional and non-traditional energies," Governor Barbour said. "We have tremendous research and development capabilities within our university system as well as a wealth of experience and expertise within the private sector to complement our development potential."

In developing its blueprint, the Commission created an energy advisory council made up of one governor-appointed energy expert from each of the 13 Appalachian states and two federal representatives. Members of this group used their expertise, ideas, and experience, as well as the information gathered by ARC, to develop regional energy strategies and identify opportunities for ARC and its member states to address the changing energy market environment.

"The blueprint shows the way to maximizing the development of Appalachia's abundant natural energy resources," said Anne B. Pope, ARC Federal Co-Chair. "It draws on the

input of over one hundred industry experts, educators, government officials and entrepreneurs in assessing the Appalachian Region's broad energy picture."

ARC State Director Mike Armour of Tupelo applauded the Washington staff and members of the Energy Advisory Council Blueprint team, which included Monty Montgomery from the Mississippi Development Authority. The group compiled data and delivered an impressive comprehensive study in a very short period of time.

Three basic strategic objectives for Appalachia are laid out in the blueprint:

1. Promoting energy efficiency in Appalachia to enhance the Region's economic competitiveness.
2. Increasing the use of renewable energy resources, especially biomass, in Appalachia to produce alternative transportation fuels, electricity and heat.
3. Supporting the development of conventional energy resources, especially advanced clean coal, in Appalachia to produce alternative transportation fuels, electricity and heat.

Federal Co-Chair Pope also announced a competition for \$400,000 in grants for projects to develop renewable energy resources and increase energy efficiency to further the implementation of the blueprint. Over the next several months, ARC will be seeking partners within the federal government and the private sector to more than double this amount before issuing a request for proposals for relevant energy projects.

The ARC's energy blueprint is available at [www.arc.gov/news](http://www.arc.gov/news).

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